

Message Text

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ACTION SCA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 SCSE-00 ISO-00 SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 PPTE-00

SSO-00 /044 W

-----221758Z 012980 /44

P 221630Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSULATE MERIDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1027

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS MERIDA 0012

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MX

SUBJECT: TRAVEL ADVISORY

1. SINCE SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1977, THERE HAVE BEEN CIVIL DISTURBANCES IN AND AROUND THE TOWN OF CHEMAX IN THE STATE OF YUCATAN. CHEMAX IS LOCATED ON MAIN HIGHWAY, ROUTE 180, BETWEEN MERIDA AND CAN CUN. IT IS 29 KILOMETERS EAST OF CITY OF VALLADOLID AND VERY CLOSE TO BORDER OF STATES OF YUCATAN AND QUINTANA ROO. THE MAYAN RUINS OF CHICHEN ITZA ARE ON SAME HIGHWAY 70 KILOMETERS TO THE WEST OF CHEMAX. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE BUS AND AUTO TRAFFIC OF AMERICAN TOURISTS FROM MERIDA TO CAN CUN AND FROM CAN CUN TO CHICHEN ITZA.

2. MAIN HIGHWAY DOES, HOWEVER, PASS SLIGHTLY TO NORTH OF CHEMAX. TODATE CONSULATE HAS RECEIVED NO REPORTS WHICH INDICATE TOURIST TRAFFIC WOULD BE ENDANGERED BY THESE DISTURBANCES.

3. HOWEVER, SEVERAL FIREFIGHTS HAVE DEVELOPED WITH CAMPESINO GROUPS OPPOSING STATE POLICE FORCES AND MEXICAN ARMY UNITS. ON JANUARY 15, LOCAL POLICE WERE RUN OUT OF TOWN BY CAMPESINOS AND FORCED TO TAKE REFUGE IN VALLADOLID. THE TOWN HALL WAS OCCUPIED FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS AND THE MAYOR FORCED TO
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RESIGN. IT APPEARS HE COULDN'T ACCOUNT FOR CERTAIN BUILDING MATERIALS WHICH WERE TO BE USED FOR THE TOWN'S ANNUAL FAIR. ON TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY ,JANUARY 18 AND 19, STATE POLICE AND TWO COMPANIES OF MEXICAN ARMY ENGAGED IN SPORATIC GUN FIGHTS WITH CAMPESINO GROUPS. SIX STATE POLICE WERE WOUNDED AND UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF CAMPESINOS ALLEGEDLY HIT BY GUN FIRE. AT ONE TIME APPROXIMATELY 400 CAMPESINOS ATTACKED

THE MUNICIPAL PALACE, 150 OF WHOM WERE ARMED. CHIEF OF STAFF OF MEXICAN ARMY PERSONALLY MADE VISIT ON JANUARY 20 TO SURVEY SITUATION.

4. WHILE ALL IS QUIET IN CHEMAX AT THIS TIME, IT IS POSSIBLE TROUBLE MAY RECURR. IF SO, CONSULATE WILL ADVISE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY IF TRAVEL ADVISORY IS NECESSARY.

5. NOTE: THIS IS AREA INHABITED BY MOSTLY PEOPLE OF PURE MAYAN DESCENT WHO RESENT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE AND GOVERNMENT RESTRAINTS. HISTORICALLY, IT HAS BEEN SITE WHERE TWO REVOLUTIONS BEGAN.
ASHFORD

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Message Attributes

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